

STAR WARS

ROLEPLAYING GAME

The Crypt of Saalo Morn

A Dark Side Adventure for the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*

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THE CRYPT OF SAALO MORN

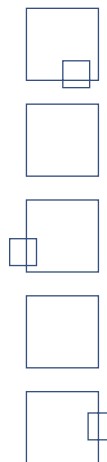
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The Crypt of Saalo Morn is an adventure for the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*, designed for four to six characters of 5th to 6th level. In a time-lost tomb, the heroes fall into the clutches of a potent evil—the spirit of a long-dead Sith. This scenario can be used along with the new skills in Chapter 2 and the creatures and archetypes in Chapter 6 of the *Dark Side Sourcebook* by Bill Slavicsek and JD Wiker.

Background

A thousand years after Exar Kun and Ulic Qel-Droma waged the Sith War against the Old Republic, a would-be Sith fanatic named Saalo Morn failed his training as a Force adept. Embracing the dark side, Saalo Morn stole his master's most valued possession, a helmet imbued with the power of the Force, and fled to an isolated but primitive world.

Once established in his new home, Saalo Morn tried to set up a kingdom over the native tribes. He convinced them to waylay the few travelers who came to his tiny world, and they brought him their spoils as tribute. But in all the decades he lived there, no one with the potential to become his apprentice ever appeared. Saalo Morn's dreams of creating a new Sith Empire and establishing himself as the new Dark Lord of the Sith died with him.

But Saalo Morn still clung to a semblance of life, enduring as a dark stain on the Force—a dark side spirit obsessed with the dreams he had nurtured in life. Morn's spirit haunted his crypt in a sort of deathless sleep, waiting only for the arrival of someone strong in the Force to awaken him and either serve as his vessel in the physical world or become his dark apprentice.

Introduction

The GM can put Saalo Morn's crypt on nearly any out-of-the-way world in the *Star Wars* galaxy, provided that the crypt has not been discovered and explored yet and that there is no one particularly sensitive to the Force nearby who could have (and would have) sensed the presence of either Saalo Morn's spirit or the artifact in his crypt.

Setting

The crypt itself should be difficult to reach—in a narrow fissure in a deep ravine, behind a tiny opening in a high cliff wall, or perhaps through a forgotten doorway in a secret catacomb. The heroes should not simply be able to walk in and start poking around. They should have to make a difficult climb or search for a while before discovering the tomb's location.

The crypt of Saalo Morn consists of five distinct areas. Note that Morn can attempt to use his possession power only on Force-users who enter his burial vault and try on the helmet they find there.

Doors in the Crypt: Nearly every door in the crypt is a stone plug weighing 4,000 kg. They are meant to be moved aside, usually through the efforts of several beings working together. It takes either a Strength check or Move Object check (DC 25 in either case) to shove one of these stone doors open. The heroes can also blast or cut their way through a door (Hardness 10, WP 200) to create an opening large enough to pass through.

Light in the Crypt: Remember that there are no light sources in the crypt aside from what the heroes bring with them.

Getting the Heroes Involved

The heroes can learn of the crypt's existence through half-fabricated rumors in seedy spaceport cantinas, from enigmatic references in obscure texts, from veiled tales in a Jedi holocron, or from simply stumbling upon the crypt's entrance while pursuing some other adventure. The Gamemaster might even have the descendants of the original primitives still carrying out the orders of Saalo Morn and attacking ships that land near his tomb. At the GM's discretion, the natives could have stolen or developed more advanced weapons and possess the ability to shoot their targets out of the sky with powerful ion cannons. Perhaps they even bring the heroes directly to the crypt as a sacrifice.

Remember the Risks!

Gamemasters should seriously consider the ramifications of this adventure before springing it on the heroes. Because Saalo Morn is a fairly powerful dark side spirit, heroes who enter his crypt run the danger of being consumed by his evil or of turning to the dark side themselves. If the GM is not prepared to deal with dark side characters, he should tone down Morn's power or create an "easy out" to return the characters to the path of heroism.

One example, used in this adventure, is that the destruction of the helmet also destroys Saalo Morn. The GM could also rule that Morn can only possess those who actually wear the helmet, or that by expending Force points, the heroes can "cleanse" the relic of Morn's influence.

1. Entry Hall

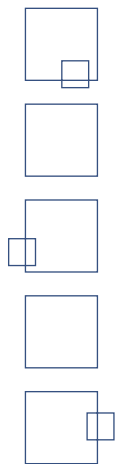
Read the following aloud to all the players:

Almost hidden among the features of the stone wall, a dark opening beckons. Inside, the ground slopes sharply downward into blackness.

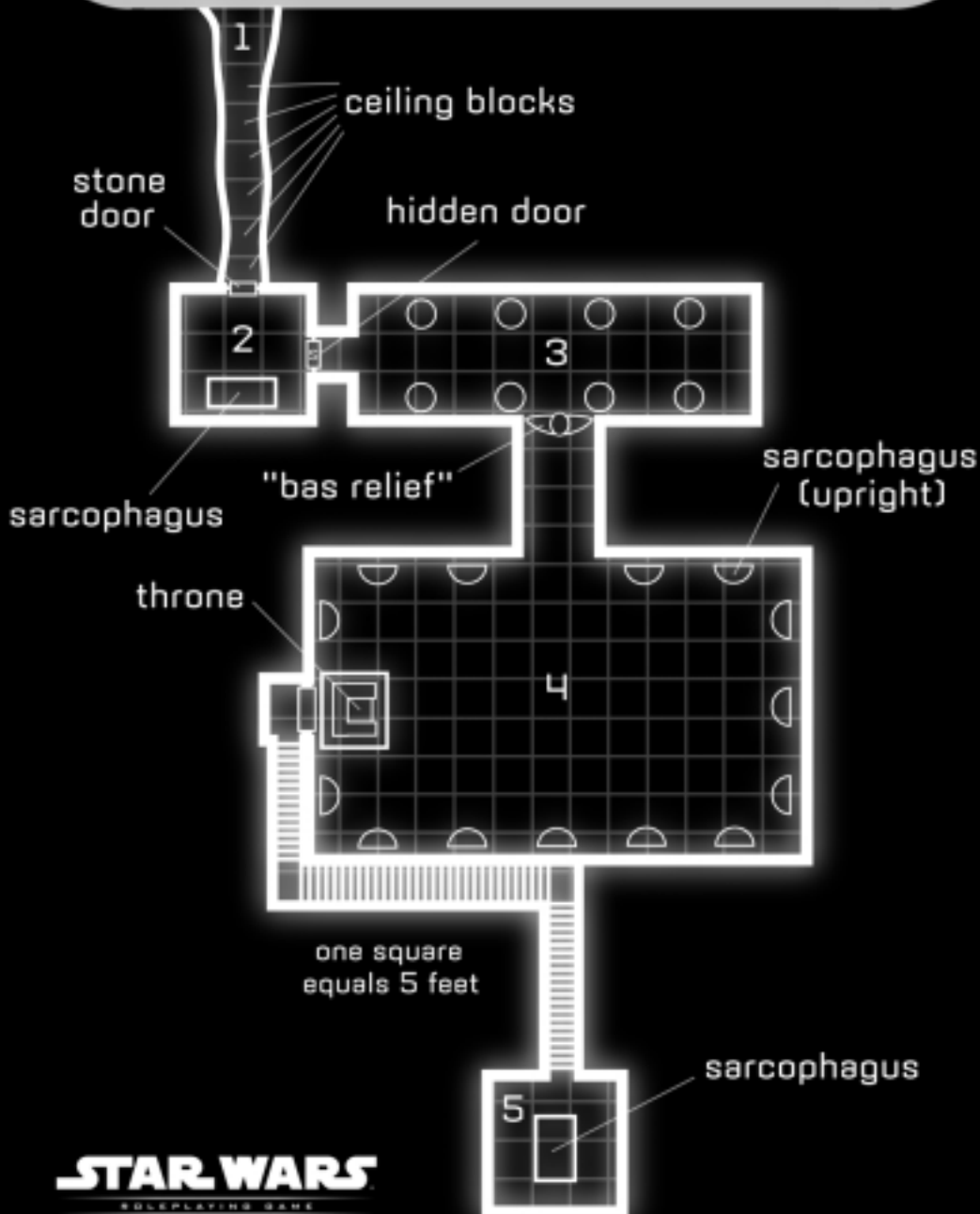
Simply drawing near the tomb allows any character with the Sense feat to pick up on the potent Force emanations coming from the tomb. Read the following aloud to that character's player:

This close to the entrance, you can feel a sort of chill in the air, as though a cold breath were passing over your skin. It is definitely coming from the entrance, but further down the passage you also get a sense of strength, a power neither light nor dark, waiting patiently to return to active use.

Should the heroes take the time to examine the entry hall, allow them to make Search checks (DC 28) to notice that the ceiling consists of half a dozen distinct square blocks of solid stone 2 meters across, covering the length of the corridor. They are suspended from above by stout chains. When the heroes open the hidden door leading to the Dark Hall (area 3), the blocks are released, and fall one by one to fill the entry hall. The characters can disarm this trap with a Disable Device check (DC 20), provided they



Crypt of Saalo Morn



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Cartography by Todd Gamble. Download a full-size version of this map from the official *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* website:
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have some way of wedging each of the six blocks in place.

If anyone is in the entry hall when the blocks drop, they must attempt a Reflex save (DC 15) to get clear. On a failure, the character suffers 5d6 damage. (Success indicates the hero suffers no damage.) A character who declares that she is running as soon as the first block falls gains +5 bonus on this and subsequent saves.

A character with the Move Object skill can also attempt to levitate the blocks to prevent them from falling. The DC to lift a block is 25, and if the character succeeds at this check while the block is falling grants a +5 Force bonus to any character saving against that particular falling stone.

Ultimately, using Move Object is also the best way to reopen the passageway. Once a block has been lifted, it can be propped into place using any object with a hardness of 5 or more (such as a weapon, or some of the various items found in the crypt itself). Similarly, since there are only six such items, lifting them all at once is a DC 30 Move Object check, costing 16 vitality points.

2. Crypt

Read the following aloud to the players:

This small, square chamber seems to be a crypt. A large sarcophagus, crudely carved with the image of an impressive humanoid figure, rests near the far wall, below a roughly-painted mural depicting the same figure pulling starships down from the sky. Scattered around the base of the sarcophagus are baskets of withered fruit, odd bits of metal fashioned into crude jewelry, and an ancient blaster pistol, its power pack long drained and dead.

The paint on the walls hides the seams of another stone door (Search check, DC 15). When the door is opened, though, it triggers the stone block trap in the entry hall (area 1). Once the trap has been dealt with, read the following aloud:

The darkness grows thicker around you, and a noise like cracking bones rises out of the open doorway. There is a brief sensation of someone staring at you intently.

To any characters with the Force-Sensitive feat, read the following aloud as well:

The feeling of being scrutinized is particularly intense for you. There is a kind of pressure on your mind for a moment ... then an impression of dark satisfaction, as though someone horrible has been waiting here for you for a very long time.

Saalo Morn has awakened, roused by the presence of Force-users in his crypt. If the heroes demur at exploring the crypt further, he uses his Affect Mind skill to convince one of their number that she saw the distinctive light of a glowrod, just for a moment, deeper inside the crypt. If the heroes have disabled the stone block trap in the entry hall, Morn uses his Illusion skill to make it appear as though their efforts have failed, and the blocks have crashed down, smashing whatever they had left to hold them up.

3. Dark Hall

The dark chamber was once Saalo Morn's meditation room, and he long ago painted every surface a lightless black to help him focus. As the heroes enter the dark hall, read the following aloud:

Larger than the last room, this chamber is shrouded in darkness, as though it clings to every surface. You can just discern the shapes of pillars running around the room. Filling the right hand wall is a large, shadowy bas-relief of a robed man—the same one on the sarcophagus outside—wearing a foreboding masked helmet.

The bas-relief on the wall is, in fact, Saalo Morn, awake now and searching for some sign that one of the heroes would make a good apprentice. As soon as anyone examines the bas-relief, Morn makes his presence known. Read the following aloud:

The helmeted figure suddenly moves—it is not a bas-relief at all, but some dark specter. "Welcome," it rasps, in a gravelly voice. "Welcome to the home of Saalo Morn—the Dark Lord of the Sith. What offering have you brought me?"

Saalo Morn has chosen to interact with the heroes in hopes that at least one of them displays the kind of fear, hatred, or anger that he is looking for in a student. He gladly tells them anything about himself that they ask—aggrandizing his history, of course—and tries hard to seem as though he wishes to help them.

On the subject of escaping the crypt, though, he says only: "The key to resetting the ancient traps—and thus, reopening the way out—lies interred with my bones deep beneath here. But the dark side is strong there—stronger than any of you. You would do far better to lie down here and die of starvation, than to face the horrors that await you below."

Saalo Morn hopes to trick the heroes into descending down into his burial vault. If the heroes refuse to rise to his challenge, though, he offers "encouragement," by releasing guardian spirits (or illusions of guardian spirits, at any rate) to battle them. If this happens, read the following aloud:

The specter of Saalo Morn fades away, revealing a larger hall beyond him. From the darkness, skeletal figures rise up and surge forward, wielding ancient blaster pistols and primitive hand weapons.

Guardian Spirit: Dark side walking dead, Thug 5; IM -2 (Dex); Def 11 (+3 armor, -2 Dex); Spd 6 m; VP/WP -/11; Atk +7 melee (dmg 1d8 +2, sword), +3 ranged (dmg 3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Body swap, walking dead; SV Fort +3, Ref -1, Will -1; SZ M; DSP 8; Rep 1; Str 14, Dex 6, Con 8, Int 1, Wis 6, Cha 2. Challenge Code A.

Skills: Listen +4, Spot +4.

Feats: Alertness, Toughness.

These are only phantasms of course, but while the heroes believe, they are real enough. (See the Illusion skill and Guardian Spirit entries in the *Dark Side Sourcebook*.)

Once all of them have been defeated, the skeletal figures simply vanish in the darkness.

4. Grand Vault

Read the following aloud:

This great room has the aspect of an ancient throne room, complete with an elaborately worked golden chair on a dais near the right-hand wall. Arranged around the room are standing sarcophagi, bearing likenesses of Humans, Devaronians, Twi'leks, and Rodians. They all appear to be in tremendous agony.

Behind the golden throne, a stone door is quickly gliding shut, and Saalo Morn's raspy voice whispers, "Hurry! This way ..."

Morn is using his illusion ability to lend urgency to the heroes' actions. In fact, the door is already closed, and it requires a Search check (DC 20) to locate the catch on the throne that allows it to open. Otherwise, forcing it open requires a Strength or Move Object check (DC 30). The stone door has Hardness 12, WP 250.

Meanwhile, Morn uses his Fear skill to weaken any Force-users in the group, then sets another illusion into motion. Read the following aloud:

With a low, grinding noise, one of the sarcophagi opens painfully. From the darkness within there is a quick *snap-hiss* noise, and the unmistakable pale glow of a lightsaber illuminates the skeletal figure inside. It steps toward you, and Saalo Morn's voice cries: "Too late! Why didn't you hurry when I told you to?"

This particular guardian spirit is real, and armed with a real, if ancient, lightsaber—but Saalo Morn uses his illusions to make it appear as though the thing is immune to the heroes' attacks—even their Force powers. Morn's intent is to convince the heroes that this foe is unbeatable—either forcing them to hurry deeper into the crypt or tricking them into using the dark side to take down the skeletal figure. While they fight, Morn goes on about how this creature was once his student, but was corrupted by the dark side. Now, he claims, his former student can only be stopped by the dark side—either through calling on the dark side, or using Force Grip, Force Lightning, Hatred, or Drain Force. If a hero complies, Saalo Morn lets it appear as though it has worked—though really, he is just letting the illusion fade—and advises the hero to strike once more, "with all of your anger," to finish off the skeletal opponent.

Guardian Spirit: Dark side walking dead, Thug 6; Init -2; Def 11 (+3 armor, -2 Dex); Spd 6 m; VP/WP -/11; Atk +8/+3 melee (2d8, crit-19-20 lightsaber), +4 ranged; SQ Body swap, walking dead, DR 10; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; SZ M; DSP 8; Rep 1; Str 14, Dex 6, Con 8, Int 1, Wis 6, Cha 2. Challenge Code B.

Equipment: Lightsaber.

Skills: Listen +4, Spot +5.

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber), Toughness.

Once the skeleton has been defeated (or the heroes have found their way into the long stairway behind the throne), Saalo Morn congratulates the characters on their good work and tells them that they have only a little further to go to retrieve the key that will set them free.

5. The Vault of Saalo Morn

If the heroes have come this far and still not realized that Saalo Morn is merely using them, they are in terrible danger. Read the following aloud:

The ghostly figure of Saalo Morn stands beside the large sarcophagus that bears his image—more finely wrought than the one in the entry chamber. "Here I lie waiting," says Saalo Morn, his voice filled with a kind of pride. "And also here lies the key to your freedom. Remove the lid, and take up my ancient helm. With it, you can unlock the barriers and be free at last."

Lifting the lid of the sarcophagus requires only a Strength or Move Object check (DC 25). Once the heroes have the lid open, read the following aloud:

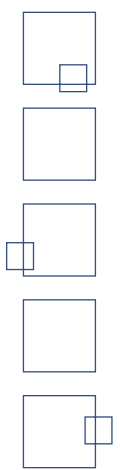
The lid gives way and reveals beneath the husk of what once was Saalo Morn, wearing a dusty helmet and gorget of dark metal. "There!" Saalo Morn says eagerly. "Take the helmet for your own, and it will amplify your powers enough so that moving the stone blocks in the entrance will be child's play! Hurry!"

Once again, the heroes should be questioning why their escape is so important to Saalo Morn, but if they question him, Morn ignores the question and points out how urgently the party needs to get out. Once Morn identifies the person whom he thinks is the most likely to don the helmet, he uses his Illusion skill once more to make it appear that the non-Force-using characters are unable to breathe. "You can only save them by donning the helmet!" he tells any Force-users in the group, then adds, "The air in here has become too thin for the others."

The heroes now have two choices. They can either accede to Morn's demands and don the helmet, or they can attempt to destroy him. In the former case, Morn laughs and abruptly vanishes. The hero who dons the helmet discovers that it does indeed enhance his Force abilities, adding a +5 Force bonus to all Force skill checks and Force-related saving throws.

However, the hero wearing the helmet is also subject to a possession attack by Saalo Morn. Anyone wearing the helmet must make a Will save (DC 8). (See the entry for Dark Side Spirits in *The Dark Side Sourcebook*.) Unlike ordinary dark side spirit possession, though, Saalo Morn can try again once each minute for as long as the character wears the helmet. Casting the helm aside enrages Morn—but he is unable to do anything about it, other than attempting to convince the hero that his friends are dying.

The heroes can also destroy Saalo Morn by expending Force points to inflict damage against him; each Force point spent for this purpose causes Morn to lose 1d4 wound points. Since he has nowhere else to flee, they merely have to spend enough Force points to finish him off.


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Alternately, the heroes can simply destroy the helmet (hardness 15, WP 24), which severs Saalo Morn's connection to the physical world. Morn tries to stop this from happening by covering the helmet with illusions. Morn tries to convince the character attacking the helmet that the target of the hero's attack is not the helmet but rather another of the heroes, cowering in fear, and that the helmet is actually elsewhere. However, once the helmet is destroyed, all of Morn's illusions vanish, and the erstwhile "Sith lord" is destroyed forever.

Saalo Morn: male near-Human, FA6/Dark Side Devotee 6; IM +0; Def 20 (+10 class); Spd 10m; VP/WP 72/16; Atk +7 melee, +8 ranged; SQ Force weapon (+2d4), dark side talisman (+2), Force travel, nonphysical; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +15; SZ M; FP 6; DSP 20; Rep 12; Str 7, Dex 10, Con —, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 16. Challenge Code E.

Equipment: Dark robes.

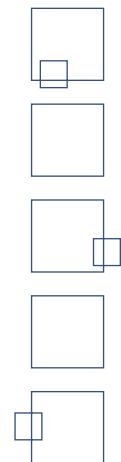
Skills: Bluff +5, Intimidate +11, Sense Motive +11, Survival +7
Force Skills: Affect Mind +18, Farseeing +6, Fear +17, Force Defense +15, Heal Self +9, Illusion +18, Move Object +17, See Force +14

Feats: Force-Sensitive, Iron Will, Persuasive, Skill Emphasis (Fear), Skill Emphasis (Illusion), Weapon Group Proficiencies (blaster pistols, primitive weapons, simple weapons)
Force Feats: Alter, Control, Force Lightning, Force Whirlwind, Prolong Force, Sense

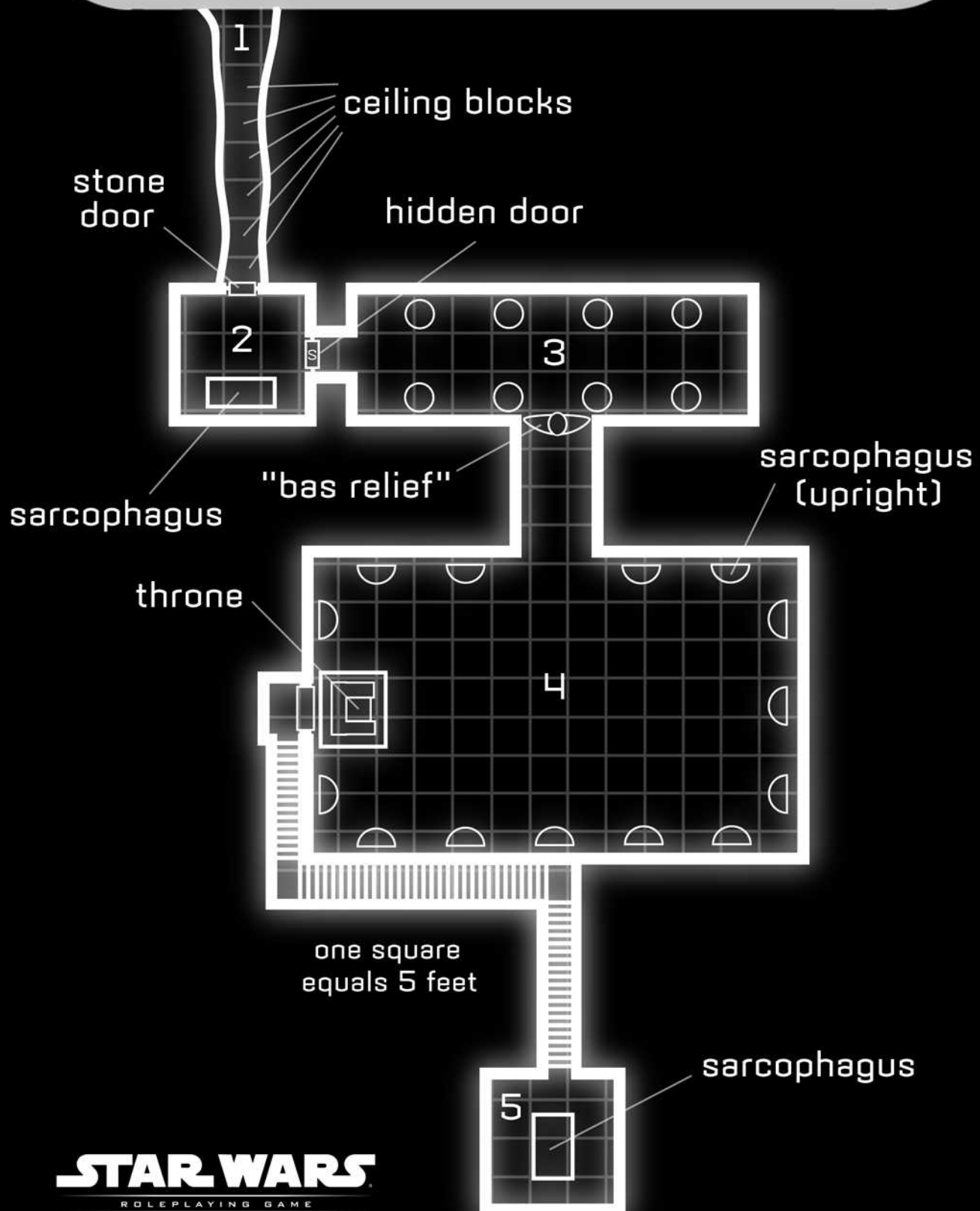
Once Saalo Morn is defeated, the heroes can attempt a Search check (DC 25) to find a secret compartment under his sarcophagus. Inside are the treasures he accumulated in life—approximately 50,000 credits worth of precious metals and gems.

About the Author

JD Wiker joined Wizards of the Coast roleplaying games division from the Customer Service team. Since 1998 he has worked on the ALTERNITY® STAR*DRIVE® and DARK•MATTER® settings, *Diablo II* for DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®, and various *Star Wars* RPG products, including the *Dark Side Sourcebook*. He is invisible to those people with high intellects.



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